

JHS Volunteer Opportunities

The JHS's goal for its volunteer program is to ensure that all volunteers gain a sense of belonging and personal satisfaction through being part of something bigger than themselves; that they come away from their tasks feeling rewarded and valued for their time and participation. All tasks, big or small, are important parts of the overall JHS dynamic. Being plugged in to the right jobs is critical to reach and maintain that perfect dance unique to each non-profit's success.

The Johnstown Historical Society has several opportunities for volunteering, some are one-time projects such as helping at an event or fundraiser. Others include the planning and development of the events themselves, and there are other opportunities to work behind the scenes in other capacities.

Some of the following categories are more specialized and require trained personnel; others are general in nature and volunteers need no more than a general explanation of how to carry out the tasks.

Administrative

Computer Data Entry

There are many areas of record keeping for the museum that require computer and software skills. These tasks include managing membership records, collections cataloguing, contact information, running reports, updating collections data, records on accessioning and de-accessioning of museum artifacts, and other miscellaneous areas. Computer work might also include creating documents, brochures, display posters, or signs for events or advertising.

General Office Work

This may include making copies, folding brochures, production of walking tour guides or other publications. New tasks are found often in this area and may include sending thank-you notes and other mailings.

Grants

Hours and hours of preliminary work are required before an application for a grant is submitted. Help is needed for research, documentation, and grant writing. You are especially needed if you have a background in this area and have the time to devote to this process. Grants are required in many areas, and the more of them that we can apply for and receive, the better we will be able to provide the public with a quality museum and programs.

Building and Grounds

Museum Maintenance – Inside

These volunteers receive training and follow established museum procedures for regular household maintenance. Tasks include dusting, vacuuming, sweeping, cleaning windows, cleaning bathrooms, etc.

There is also a need for occasional handyman skills for minor repairs and carpentry.

Occasionally, there is a need for technical skills, such as assisting with electronic equipment set-up or configurations.

Museum Maintenance – Outside

Volunteers who enjoy being outdoors in the warmer months are tasked with planting flowers, weeding, trimming shrubs, sweeping sidewalks and steps, gutter cleaning/sealing, maintaining the trash receptacle enclosure, tracking supplies, etc.

The Town of Johnstown provides sprinkler system maintenance, outdoor pest control, fire extinguisher and boiler system maintenance and inspections, lawn mowing, and snow removal.

Collections

Museum Docents

The Parish House is open from 9:00 AM to Noon on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and by appointment.

Trained docents are responsible for opening the house to the public by turning on all the lights in all rooms on the main level and display rooms in the basement, unlocking doors, posting the “open” sign outside, and ensuring that the house is in order. When a visitor arrives, the docent will greet guests and have them sign the guestbook.

Generally, the tour starts with the viewing of a 15-minute video tour in the Visitor’s Center, followed by a tour of the Parish House and Museum, starting at the front steps. The docent provides a tour through the house and answers questions, as needed.

Before leaving for the day, the open sign is placed back inside the front porch, lights are turned off, and any running fans turned off during the summer. The house is again locked and the alarm is activated.

Accessioning/Cataloguing

Each item obtained by the historical society, whether it be a purchase, a loan, or a donation is recorded on various forms and then added to the museum’s PastPerfect software database.

To be a part of the collections group requires learning the numerical system used to record the objects, training in the handling of collections items according to established museum policies and procedures, training to assess artifact condition and writing the descriptions, measurements, and following procedures for caring for and cleaning the items when necessary.

Collections volunteers may research the use and history of the objects, record the information on paper, and place items in a logical, appropriate storage location, whether that be on display or in storage.

Data entry of this same information requires training of PastPerfect Web Edition software. This is a cross-check for the beginning collections process and requires knowledge of the numerical system as well as a general knowledge of the collection process.

Oral History

There are many volunteer opportunities with this program. One might schedule appointments with interviewees, obtain background information for use during the interview, conduct the interview with the client on camera, manage the camera, transcribe the interview into a written document, upload the digital interview files to the computer or cloud.

Displays and Exhibits

Opportunities to assist the Museum Director with both on and off-site displays and exhibits could include research of a particular subject, assisting with set up or break down of exhibits, publicity, and paperwork documentation for tracking the movement of all artifacts in and out of displays to ensure proper handling of objects and tracking and recordkeeping is completed.

Research

Research that includes historic Johnstown properties, past businesses, and past or present resident profiles are needed to support our exhibits and to ensure the information we provide to the public is historically and factually correct. This job is not everyone's "cup of tea". It sometimes requires hours of sitting at the computer or searching through the JHS library and archives for information to piece together the past like a jigsaw puzzle; however, it can be done on a volunteer's own schedule with the option to work from home. The JHS also has three computers available for this work to be done at the Parish House.

Memberships/Volunteers

Memberships

JHS memberships and volunteer involvement are critical components of our organization. Without them, we could not survive as a non-profit. There is always a need for creative ideas for increasing our memberships and volunteer base. One who works in this area might assist with membership records maintenance and participate in membership/volunteer drives.

Volunteer Coordinator

A Volunteer Coordinator serves as a main point of contact for other volunteers during larger events and fundraisers, tracks volunteer hours and logs them in PastPerfect, participates in planning the JHS Annual Meeting of the Membership and occasional group outings to other museums, and helps the Museum Director when needed with administrative tasks.

Fundraising and Events

Fundraising

Develop materials needed to promote the Johnstown Historical Society and the Parish House and Museum to businesses or individuals who could be potential donors or sponsors. A part of this volunteer assignment could include the research of a potential contributing company to learn who in that company is responsible for their financial decision-making and perhaps also be involved in a presentation of these materials in person, if required, or prepare the necessary correspondence to accomplish this task.

- ***Sponsorships:*** Seek donors that can support the JHS by donating something needed to stage an event, such as equipment, supplies, or funding.

Events

Events are planned each year to raise funds for managing the historical society and the Parish House. Volunteers are needed to help set up and break down equipment and clean up after the events. Our annual events include participation in Johnstown's BBQ Day (first Saturday June), the Cemetery Crawl (last Saturday October), the Annual Meeting of the Membership each November, and a Holiday Open House (first Saturday December).

Additional events throughout the year have included fashion shows, teas, car shows, rummage sales, membership drives, a joint presentation with the Milliken Historical Society, and more. The JHS team is always looking for new opportunities to engage with the community.

Historic Preservation

The JHS takes on projects that serve to benefit the community as defined in our mission as a non-profit cultural and educational entity.

- ***The Johnstown Breeze Digitization Project:*** The Breeze has been in continuous publication since 1907. This JHS historic preservation project includes raising the funds through grants and donations to have the newspapers digitized and included online in the Colorado Historic

Newspaper Collection (CHNC) to benefit any researcher world-wide on the history of Johnstown.

Publicity/Marketing

Publicity

Every event that we do requires communicating it to the public. This may include contacting businesses, newspapers, or radio stations for permission to place advertising materials before the public. It also involves distributing the posters or flyer information in stores. If you are creative and have graphic design experience, you may be able to help with creating posters/flyers, but this is not a mandatory part of this volunteer project. Advertising is done prior to every event that we do and is a critical element of every event.

Marketing

Assist with social media as needed for the JHS Facebook page and website.

Active Committee Participation

JHS has the following committees that volunteers can participate on. These committees, which include a JHS board member, are small groups of volunteers knowledgeable in procedures and policy development who, as a group, make decisions for planning and carrying out activities related to the committee's function, and they provide project update reports as needed to the JHS Board.

- Buildings and Grounds
- Collections
- Finance
- Fundraising/Events
- Memberships/Volunteers
- Publicity/Marketing